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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/RSP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD -
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-CHINA RELATIONS

1. Summary: The Taipei dailies continued August 10 to focus their coverage on the water shortage in Taoyuan, and the newly released results of Taiwan's college entrance examination. Almost all the major Chinese-language Taipei newspapers also reported in their inside pages that the Pan-Green political parties and some pro-independence groups will stage a rally September 25 to protest the Legislative Yuan's failure to pass the U.S. arms procurement bill. The pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's biggest daily, was the only Chinese-language newspaper that reported on its front page a ruling by Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense High Military Court to give a life sentence to a major for leaking confidential information to China.

2. Most newspapers ran editorials on Taiwan's trade performance, judicial system, and a local gangster's lawsuit. The pro-independence "Liberty Times" ran an op-ed piece by an assistant professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at National Sun Yet-sen University, Chang Hsi-mo, who wrote that China and the United States are entering a special type of "New Cold War" as wrestling between superpowers in the region is getting increasingly intense. End summary.

"New Cold War Between the United States and China"

Chang Hsi-mo, Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at National Sun Yet-sen University, commented in an op-ed piece in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 700,000] (8/10):

"The focus of the history of East Asia is shifting from economics and the war on terrorism to geopolitical conflicts. Wrestling between superpowers is getting increasingly intense [in the region], and the atmosphere is becoming to resemble that of a 'New Cold War' between the United States and China. .

"Changes in the U.S.-China relationship have also evidently affected the situation on the Korean Peninsula. The recently held fourth round of the Six Party Talks was the longest talks that have ever been held among the six parties. Even though Russia (with the blessings of China) adopted new moves to [successfully] disturb Washington's plan, the whole process [of the talks] showed that the United States' policy has changed. Washington is showing a strong interest in maintaining the talks and reaching a resolution [with regard to the nuclear program on the Korean Peninsula] in an attempt to take away the 'North Korean card' from China's hands and to create a more favorable position for itself in its future wrestling with China.

"All signs show that China and the United States are now entering a special type of New Cold War. Both sides remain a major trade partner to the other, but the geopolitical wrestling between the two, which is centered on conflicts over energy strategies, is just heating up."

PAAL